

Recommended Policy Revisions to Take Effect 2019-20 Board Policy (BP) 6154

The Board of Education recognizes that meaningful homework assignments can be a valuable extension of student learning time while affirming that the school setting is the primary and most effective teaching and learning environment.

Homework serves to supplement and complement classroom instruction and the Board believes, as research supports, that student learning is positively affected when homework assignments are purposeful, engaging, and appropriate in quality and quantity. The purpose of homework is to promote high quality student learning and achievement, and to nurture a desire for students to extend their learning.

Homework assignments shall be reasonable in length and appropriate to the grade level and course. The Board expects that the number, frequency, and degree of difficulty of homework assignments will increase with the grade level and the maturity of students. Teachers shall assign homework only as necessary to fulfill academic goals and reinforce current instruction.

The following values are foundational to the district's vision for effective implementation of homework:

1. Parents/guardians and teachers shall be mindful of the need for students to live balanced lives so they may achieve optimal health, development and learning.
2. Homework shall have a positive impact on learning and achievement.
3. Homework shall have a positive impact on student attitude, self-esteem, and healthy development of the whole student.
4. Homework shall be the work of the student.
5. Teachers shall not be required to assign homework.

Homework is defined as school-related and assigned work completed beyond the regular school day. Homework *may* be assigned when necessary to support classroom lessons, enable students to complete unfinished assignments, or review and apply academic content for better understanding.

The Board acknowledges the body of scholarly research demonstrating the minimal to modest impact of homework on student achievement. This acknowledged research, including meta-analyses by researchers such as Harris Cooper and John Hattie, have been unable to reveal a significant positive impact at the elementary level and demonstrate a moderate positive impact at the secondary level, though this impact diminishes when the quantity of homework becomes too large.

SUPPORT

To further support students' homework efforts, the Superintendent or designee may establish and maintain telephone help lines, provide access to school library media centers and technological resources, and/or provide before-school and after-school programs where students can receive homework assistance from teachers, volunteers, and/or student tutors. The Board encourages the Superintendent or designee to design class and transportation schedules that will enable students to make use of homework support services.

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. 1700 - Relations between Private Industry and the Schools)

(cf. 3541 - Transportation Routes and Services)

(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)

(cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs)

(cf. 6112 - School Day)

(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)

(cf. 6163.1 - Library Media Centers)

Recommended Policy Revisions to Take Effect 2019-20
Board Policy (BP) 6154

MAKEUP WORK

Students who miss school work shall be given the opportunity to complete all assignments and tests that can be reasonably provided. As determined by the teacher, the assignments and tests shall be reasonably equivalent to, but not necessarily identical to, the assignments and tests missed during the absence. Students shall receive full credit for work satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. No late penalty need be imposed and no minimum penalty is established by this policy.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

For the purposes of this policy, a ‘reasonable period of time’ shall be defined as at least two school days per day of absence.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

The Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians that no student may have his/her grade reduced or lose academic credit for any excused absence when missed assignments and tests are satisfactorily completed within a reasonable period of time. Such notification shall include the full text of Education Code 48205. (Education Code 48980)

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

The teacher of any class from which a student is suspended may require the student to complete any assignments and tests missed during the suspension. (Education Code 48913)

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

COLLABORATION

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with school administrators and teachers to develop and regularly review guidelines for the assignment of homework and the related responsibilities of students, staff, and parents/guardians. One of the goals of collaboration shall be to establish common philosophies and practices across school sites, grade levels, and courses. Monthly site collaboration time as well as other staff meeting times may be used to create accessible common school-wide calendars, coordinate assignments to minimize overlapping tests and projects, and for discussion of best practices related to homework assignments.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing professional development shall focus on the quality of homework. As needed, teachers may receive training in designing relevant homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives. Professional development for teachers may include:

- Training in design of relevant homework assignments that reinforce classroom learning objectives
- Training in research-based practices for grading including the specific impact of zeros
- Training in best practices for each of the four types of homework

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

NOTIFICATION

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At the beginning of the school year, teachers shall communicate homework expectations to students and their parents/guardians. Homework guidelines also shall be included in student and/or parent handbooks. These communications shall include the manner in which homework relates to achievement of academic standards and course content, the impact of homework assignments on students' grades, any school resources and programs that are available to provide homework support, and ways in which parents/guardians may appropriately assist their children.

Although it is the student's responsibility to undertake assignments independently, parents/guardians may serve as a resource and are encouraged to ensure that their child's homework assignments are completed. When a student repeatedly fails to complete their homework, the teacher shall notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible so that corrective action can be taken prior to the release of any final grades or report cards.

ANNUAL REVIEW

On an annual basis, the Superintendent or designee shall initiate evaluation of this policy and its regulations and provide recommendations for revision as needed.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

[48205](#) Absences for personal reasons

[48913](#) Completion of work missed by suspended student

[48980](#) Parental notifications

[58700-58702](#) Tutoring and homework assistance program; summer school apportionment credit

Management Resources:

SBE POLICIES

Parent Involvement in the Education of Their Children, 1994

Policy Statement on Homework, 1995

Policy ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: **XXXXXX** Alameda, California

Recommended Policy Revisions to Take Effect 2019-20
Administrative Regulation (AR) 6154

School-Site Homework Plan

The principal and staff at each school shall develop and regularly review a school-site homework plan which includes guidelines for the assignment of homework and describes the responsibilities of students, staff and parents/guardians. Students and parents/guardians shall be consulted in the development and review process.

The plan shall adhere to the guidelines and foundational values established in Board Policy 6154, be aligned to research-based, best practices, and articulate all of the following:

1. For each grade level or (as appropriate) department, the amount of time that students shall be expected to spend on homework including nightly/weekly expectations and weekend/extended break expectations. Where relevant, the plan shall also articulate expectations/limits for summer homework.
2. For each grade level or (as appropriate), the extent to which homework assignments shall systematically involve participation by parents/guardians and how parents/guardians are provided strategies to help their students.
3. The means by which students and parents/guardians shall be informed about the expectations, assessment methods, and grade impact of homework assignments.
4. Techniques that will be taught to help students allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines and develop good personal study habits
5. The access that students shall have to obtain:
 - a. Resource materials from the library media center
 - b. Assistance and/or tutoring through telephone help lines and/or after-school centers
6. The means by which teachers shall coordinate assignments across grade levels and/or departments so that students do not receive an overload of homework one day and very little the next
7. For each grade level, the extent to which homework assignments shall emphasize independent research, reports, special reading and problem-solving activities
8. The means by which students are provided meaningful feedback/evaluation on their homework that supports their progress toward mastery of the standards.
9. For each grade level or (as appropriate) department, the impact of homework on a student's grade or overall performance assessment, including (where relevant) the approximate percentage of the total grade that homework comprises.
10. Other practices/policies identified by the site that enact the Board's vision for effective implementation of homework
11. The means by which the site will assess ongoing the success of school-site homework plan elements.

Regulation ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

approved: August 25, 2009 Alameda, California

Recommended Policy Revisions to Take Effect 2019-20
Exhibit (E) 6154

School-Site Homework Plan (District Template)

This plan shall be used in the absence of a site-developed plan that satisfies the requirements of AR 6154.

School-Site Homework Policies and Practices:

1. The concepts to be practiced at home shall have been previously introduced in the classroom.
2. Students shall be provided adequate direction and understanding of the assignment as a precedent for assigning homework. Where appropriate, classroom instructional time shall be given at the onset to assist students in effectively understanding and starting the assignment. Instruction shall include opportunities for development of organizational and study skills.
3. When assigned, homework must include a clear articulation of the following:
 - a. The purpose(s) and expected outcome(s) shall be clearly articulated in advance.
 - b. How it is related to prior and/or future classroom instruction
 - c. How it will be assessed and what, if any, specific assessment tools (e.g. rubric) will be used. If specific assessment tools are to be used, they shall be provided in advance.
 - d. Whether it will be part of the student's grade and, if so, the value of the assignment
4. Feedback and evaluation for homework shall be timely and clear so the student may meaningfully incorporate that feedback into subsequent related class/course work. At the secondary level or in any instance where homework is graded, it must be assessed based on the course content/objectives and the student must receive feedback that supports their progress toward mastery if submission of the homework is required or the assignment will count toward a student's grade.
5. In designing and assigning homework teachers shall take into account the need for students to lead balanced lives and engage in activities beyond schoolwork. This shall include consideration of the total length of time it takes to complete a given assignment as well as the time allotted for a student to work on the assignment prior to the due date. Further, this shall also include consideration of any requirement that students collaborate with each other to achieve the stated purpose and outcomes.
6. Homework assigned over standard (2-3 day) weekends shall not exceed what is typical for a single night during the regular school week.
7. Students shall not be expected to complete homework over extended breaks (Fall, Winter, Spring, and any other breaks of one week or more). Students may choose to make-up existing assignments, work ahead on future assignments, or complete aspects of assignments that span both ends of an extended break. No homework shall be assigned that requires specific completion over an extended break.
8. No summer homework shall be assigned with the exception of Advanced Placement/Honors courses. In the case of Advanced Placement/Honors courses, summer homework should be limited to only the tasks that are most critical to a supporting student success in the course.
9. Assignments shall be communicated with an adequate amount of advance notice. No assignment communicated after the end of the class period shall be due the next school day.
10. Parents/guardians shall be provided access to the following information:
 - a. What homework has been assigned and whether it will be included in a student's grade
 - b. The date of assignment and due date

This shall be done in a manner that allows parents/guardians to access the above information outside of school hours and without having to travel to the physical school campus. It is recommended that such access be through direct provision of the information via an online medium, in particular at the secondary grade level where the district provides access to on-line course tools.

Recommended Policy Revisions to Take Effect 2019-20
Exhibit (E) 6154

11. When a student repeatedly fails to complete his/her homework, the teacher shall notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible so that corrective action can be taken prior to the release of any final grades or report cards.
12. All supplies, materials, and equipment needed to complete assigned homework shall be provided to pupils free of charge.
13. No assignment shall be made which is punitive in nature.
14. Loss of recess shall not be a consequence for lack of homework completion.
15. Whenever possible, homework should take into consideration individual student needs and abilities through various forms of differentiation. Homework assigned should be appropriate to the student's age and developmental level with regard to length of assignment and time available for completion.
16. Accommodations or modifications specified in IEP/504 plans shall take precedence over any of the requirements/guidance stated in this policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Teacher responsibilities are outlined in the governing guidance section of Board Policy 6154. The roles and responsibilities of other stakeholder groups are detailed below.

Students are responsible for:

1. Ensuring understanding of the homework and asking for clarification or help when needed.
2. Regularly completing assigned homework in a timely manner.
3. Planning for long-term assignments, when developmentally appropriate.
4. Recording assignments in their planner or using another means of recording homework.
5. Putting forth their best effort to produce quality work.
6. Communicating to parents and teachers when homework assignments become overwhelming or if they are not consistently able to do the homework within the time guidelines, or if challenges or questions arise.

Parents/Guardians/Caregivers are encouraged to:

(NOTE: More student independence is emphasized as students progress toward middle and high school)

1. Encourage reading at all grade levels.
2. Make their best effort to provide an appropriate environment for homework to be done.
3. Provide a healthy balance between homework, extra and co-curricular activities, and family commitments.
4. Support their student in following-up with their teacher before, during, and/or after an absence. If an absence is planned in advance, parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to follow-up with their student's teacher prior to the date(s) of absence.
5. When able, check student homework to assess if student is completing correct tasks.
6. Support students to set aside time for nightly homework and outline plans for longer term assignments.

Site Administrators are responsible for:

1. Ensuring compliance with the homework policy.
2. Coordinating school-wide resources and practices that support homework, e.g. use of planners, library facilities, academic support programs, ensuring effective communication between teachers so that homework assignments are balanced across content areas and courses.
3. Ensuring this policy is easily accessible (and translated as needed) on the school's website or upon request.

Recommended Policy Revisions to Take Effect 2019-20
Exhibit (E) 6154

4. Supporting and facilitating teacher collaboration and professional dialogue about homework and balancing the overall load of assignments across multiple teachers.
5. Introducing parents/guardians to the homework policy within the first month of school (At minimum this should be done on Back to School Night).

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for:

1. Publicizing and making easily available on the district's website the homework policy as adopted by the Board of Education; make translations and hard copies available as needed.
2. Providing training for administrators to work with their staffs on implementation of the homework policy.
3. Crafting, publicizing, and overseeing administrative remedies that students, parents/guardians, and teachers can access in the event this board policy and/or administrative guidelines are not implemented.
4. Directing staff to design an evaluation process to be completed after the first full year of implementation of the policy. If changes are made to the policy or regulations given the outcome of the evaluation, a second evaluation will be completed after full implementation of the revised BP/AR.
5. Including at least one question assessing the quality and amount of homework in an annual school survey of parents/guardians. The Superintendent and/or designee shall monitor responses to check for policy compliance.

Policy ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
adopted: XXXXXX Alameda, California